

 VERMONT DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES Family Services Policy Manual		<h1>11</h1>
Chapter:	Mission & Outcomes	
Subject:	Mission, Values, & Guiding Principles	Page 1 of 1
Approved:	Cynthia K. Walcott, Deputy Commissioner	Effective: 12/20/2012
Supersedes:	Family Services Policy No. 11	Dated: 9/3/99

Introduction

The mission, values, and guiding principles of the Family Services Division provide a structure and context for the work of every staff member and the range of decisions that are made each day. Our [Practice Model](#), which articulates our core values, the principles that guide us, and best practices, shall guide the work we do with children, youth, and families.

All staff members shall be familiar with the Division's mission, values, guiding principles, and [Practice Model](#), as well as understand how they impact their individualized role in the delivery of quality support and services to children, youth, and families.

Mission

As a Division, we are committed to protecting children, strengthening families, and ensuring that every child and youth has a permanent family or family connection. In our work, we use family-centered strategies in partnership with family members and communities. While the way we work is continually evolving, we remain focused on child safety, well-being, permanency, and law abidance.

Values & Guiding Principles:

- All children have the right to be safe.
- All families have both risk and safety factors.
- Everyone is capable of growth and change – with support and adequate resources.
- Engaged relationships hold the promise for sustained change.
- Valuing a family's expertise enhances our work together.
- Separating children from their families is traumatic and should be seen as a last resort.
- Early engagement of the larger family network is a key to success.
- Responsibility should be shared and use of authority limited.
- Each family's cultural, ethnic, and spiritual diversity deserves respect.

As a Division, the best interests of the children and youth we serve are critical to our focus.

To live to these values, we shall be intentional, unwavering, committed to addressing capacity, and focused on the long term.